

File - Cuba

Copy 9 of 10

19 November 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR : Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Responses to DCI Questions Regarding 10 September Meeting in the White House Re IDEALIST Coverage of Cuba

- REFERENCE :
- a. COMOR Minutes, 1 September 1962 Meeting (TCS-13349-62)
 - b. Memo to ADCI from Chairman, COMOR, Dated 4 September 1962; Subject: "Cuban Requirements" (TCS 13350-62)
 - c. Memo for the Special Group from [redacted] Dated 11 September 1962; Subject: "Reconnaissance of Cuba" [redacted]
 - d. Memo for ADCI from Chairman, COMOR, Dated 9 September 1962; Subject: "Next U-2 Mission over Cuba" [redacted]

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You have asked for replies to the following seven questions. We are taking the liberty of utilizing the question and answer method for our response:

- (1) Q: On whose initiative was the 10 September meeting called?
- A: The 10 September meeting held in Mr. Bundy's office followed a special meeting in the White House Situation Room relating to other Cuban matters. General Carter, as the ADCI, presumably was advised by Mr. Bundy's office of the necessity for a separate session on U-2 Cuban coverage. This office advised by the DD/A of the requirement for the meeting and the necessity for the presence of someone from this organization. A subsequent check with General Carter's office, Mr. Bundy's office, and [redacted] does not reveal on whose initiative the meeting was sought; presumably only Mr. Bundy would have the answer to this.

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(2) Q: Exactly what CIA tracks were submitted? Explain how they were developed.

A: A single small map was carried to the White House meeting containing a portrayal of a single U-2 mission which was designed to cover those COMOR targets derived from a COMOR meeting of 1 September 1962 which was called to view the results of the Cuban mission (No. 3088) flown on 29 August which accounted for the initial SAM sites. The map as carried to the White House also took into account the intelligence derived from U-2 mission No. 3089, flown on 5 September which located four SAM sites in the Las Villas province. This mission was a combination of overflight and peripheral as drawn by the Operations Division of OSA. It penetrated Cuban territory over the Isle of Pines and proceeded in counter-clockwise direction south of Las Villas and Camagney Provinces, overflew Oriente Province west of Guantanamo, turning east of that base to cover the suspect SAM installation at Banes, and then proceeding northwestward along the north coast of Cuba, exiting just east of the SAM site complex to the west of Cayo Coco. This mission was drawn up by the Operations Division, OSA, on 6 or 7 September, and had the White House meeting not occurred, it would have been the route flown to fulfill our second Special Group approval for Cuban overflights for the month of September, the first of which was executed on 5 September. The primary purpose of the mission was missile search, and the primary target thereof was the Banes area where earlier photography had not been conclusive regarding the suspect SAM installation discovered there.

(3) Q: Exactly what changes were made in the submissions?

A: Based upon the objections of the Secretary of State to extended overflights of Cuban soil in the light of the discoveries of 29 August and 5 September, the single mission drawn on the map carried to the White House was broken up into four missions. Only two of these overflights were ultimately performed; one was the so-called Isle of Pines mission which was later flown to include overflight of the Zapata Swamp, and the mission finally flown on 26 September against Banes but including Guantanamo prior to reaching Banes. That portion of the original 10 September mission between 79 and 81 degrees

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west which had been designed to stay outside the known SAM sites at Las Villas was subsequently stricken from the flight planned in that area and finally flown 5 October. Again, because of the insistence of the Secretary of State, that portion of the flight planned for coverage in overflight of the south coast of Oriente Province was also deleted from the mission of 5 October which was redirected peripherally.

(4) Q: On whose instructions were the CIA flight plans prepared and presented to the 19 September meeting?

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A: OSA's instructions to prepare a map to take to the White House on 19 September came from the DD/R and also from [redacted] who asked that the chart carry the latest SAM sites plotted thereon. Again it is pertinent to state that planning for the next Cuban mission following that of 5 September began literally the day before when a paper was sent to General Carter drawn up by the Chairman of COMOR, requesting his approval for a mission which would "cover those areas of the Island which were not photographed because of weather (on preceding missions) or because the range did not permit". (Reference b.) Reference b. was a direct outgrowth of Reference a. which was the minutes of the COMOR meeting of 1 September 1962.

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(5) Q: On whose authority was the decision made to stay away from the SAM sites?

A: Following the discovery of the SAM sites on 29 August OSA, in its operational planning, began to study the future coverage of Cuba,

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At the 10 September meeting, while there was no direct confrontation over flying directly over SAM sites, there was a good deal concern on the part of the Secretary of State as noted in Reference c. with regard to Cuban overflights as opposed to peripheral coverages. The mission outlined on the map carried to the White House was a combination of overflight and peripheral, and as events have subsequently shown had it been flown as planned, it would have covered a number of SAM sites which were then either in place or in the process of being situated. The Secretary's concern over violations of Cuban air space was directly related to his stated desire to continue Cuban reconnaissance but in such a manner as to preserve "our rights to fly over international waters" and thus presumably avoid a direct violation in the event of an incident which would muddy the Cuban and Russian waters. In the course of this meeting, General Carter several times made the point that once Pioneer missile search coverage was in hand, we would be coming back to seek approval for other U-2 coverage which would retrace our steps over known SAM sites. However, he was unable to obtain from anyone present a conclusive point of view on the wisdom or folly of doing just this.

- (6) Q: What caused the delay in carrying out the four flights approved at the 10 September meeting?
- A: Highest political authority on the morning of 11 September approved two additional missions which were to be added to the one remaining for the month of September following the mission of 5 September. On 13 September Mr. Bundy interpreted highest political authority's approval to include the entire number of four missions discussed at the 10 September meeting. From 10 September on Cuban weather could best be described as generally bad, which is normal for that time of year. After 10 September, our first apparent break in the weather came on 17 September at which time Mission 3091 was flown against the Isle of Pines and was totally unsuccessful due to unforecast

cloud cover. The next weather break came on 26 September when Mission 3093 against the eastern Oriente Province and the highest priority Bana area (as noted by COMOR in Reference d.) was flown. The Isle of Pines mission was then successfully flown on 29 September as Mission No. 3095. The southern peripheral Mission 3098 was finally flown on 5 October and the last of our four permissions, Mission 3100, was finally launched successfully on 7 October. OSA Headquarters was in a continual alert briefing situation from 10 September (and earlier) up through the fourteenth of October when Mission 3101 was flown under SAC. CIA operational criteria which calls for Category II or better weather, i. e., less than 25 percent cloud cover, were employed throughout the period 10 September through 14 October. There was no occasion when mechanical trouble prevented the carrying out of any of the four flights approved at the 10 September meeting. Since 14 October, it is a fair statement to say that SAC U-2 coverage of Cuba has progressed necessarily in many instances under weather conditions far less desirable than those which were faced by OSA during the critical days from 10 September to 14 October.

(7) Q: Were Cuban flight plans ever shown to members of the Special Group?

A: By the summer of 1961 Cuban U-2 reconnaissance had become so routine that flight plans were never submitted to the Special Group along with our monthly CIA Air Activities Forecast. This was not always the case; however, for in late April 1961 immediately after the Bay of Pigs trouble when Cuban reconnaissance was resumed, the Special Group did insist on seeing a visual presentation of the missions proposed, and such a book was created and forwarded to them over General Cabell's signature.

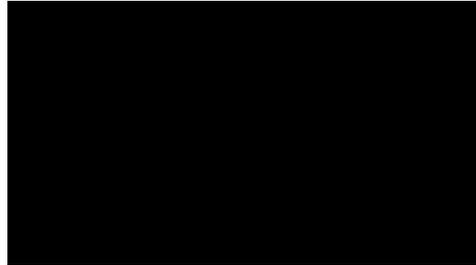
JACK C. LEDFORD
Colonel USAF

Assistant Director
(Special Activities)

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